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Raborn Faces Big Tasks

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Admiral William Raborn, newly-named head of the Central Intelligence Agency, is confronted with three critical emergencies—all involving the grimly intensifying Viet Nam conflict.

Although still awaiting Senate confirmation and certain to have no time to get settled in his new job, the former "father" of the Polaris missile faces:

—Immediately reconstituting the CIA staff in South Viet Nam, badly shattered by the terror bombing of the Saigon embassy. Nearly half of the key CIA personnel were disabled by flying glass and other debris. These heavy casualties included deaths and blindings. One report to the White House described these severe losses as "the Pearl Harbor of the CIA."

—Getting at the bottom of a Buddhist - instigated conspiracy to stage widespread anti-American demonstrations and riots the latter part of May with the aim of ousting the present South Viet Nam government and setting up a neutralist regime that would come to terms with Communist Hanoi.

—Developing a system of procedures in Washington to bring more quickly and definitely to the attention of President Johnson and his top policy-makers urgently significant CIA reports—such as the warning the Viet Cong planned to dynamite the Saigon embassy.

This is the undisclosed tragedy of that murderous outrage.

Several weeks before, CIA reported that Communist terrorists would attempt to blow up the embassy, using a truck or car for this purpose. This advance information from underground sources did not specify a date. But it was explicit that preparations had been completed and the attack could occur at any time.

This warning was ignored, or overlooked, by both Ambassador Taylor and Washington authorities. President Johnson never saw it, although members of his staff did.

President Kennedy closely scrutinized a sheaf of reports from the "intelligence community" every morning on arising. Johnson doesn't do that. Near the close of his work day, he receives an intelligence summary, which he may or may not study during the evening.

For some time reliable intelligence sources in South Viet Nam have been advising that certain Buddhist elements are organizing a new wave of vio-

lent anti-American demonstrations beginning late next month as the prelude to setting up a neutralist regime that would seek a deal with Hanoi's Communist rulers.

Central figures in this conspiracy are Thich Tri Quang, backstage chief of Buddhist dissidents, and General Nguyen Chanh Thi, Buddhist commander of the I Corps in northern South Viet Nam.

While Quang is fomenting the anti-American outbreaks, Thi is credited as getting rid of anti-Buddhist and anti-Communist officers and replacing them with neutralists. Thi, reputedly extremely ambitious, is said to aspire to be the military chief of a "coalition" government that would include Viet Cong.

Quang has a long and dubious record.

In the 1930s he was a pupil of Thich Tri Do, Marxist monk who is now the top Buddhist in North Viet Nam and a member of its Communist parliament. The two renewed their old friendship at a Buddhist conference in Cambodia in 1962, and are known to have been in communication since.

Quang was twice arrested by the French for alleged Communist sympathies, but never tried. During the regime of the late President Diem, former Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge saved Quang by giving him refuge in the U.S. embassy.

In the past year, Quang has been the undercover leader of a series of agitations that have set Saigon governments.

Also definitely contemplated by Admiral Raborn is intensifying efforts regarding Red China.

Instead of depending on pilotless drones, the new CIA director favors using an improved version of the U-2 reconnaissance plane to obtain detailed information on key Chinese bases and the disposition of ground and air forces.

Currently, U-2 reconnaissance flights over southern China are banned "for political reasons" at the insistence of the State Department. Raborn wants to change that. How far he gets remains to be seen. His predecessor, John McCone, was unable to persuade the White House to approve such flights.

Similarly, McCone was unable to get anything done about positive CIA information that Soviet ground-to-air missiles were being installed in North Viet